

Sunday, June 6, 2021
The Second Sunday after Pentecost

Be In Awe

Grace, Mercy and Peace be to you from God our Father and from our Savior Jesus Christ, Amen. Well, it's a special day! Something that we began before the pandemic is now truly beginning to come to fruition. Unity between three congregations. Three small congregations working together to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ, to keep the foothold that our Lord has established in three different localities, and three churches willing to give and take, work together. What is it that really brings us together? Of course, we could look at it from the pragmatic sort of view that well, we are three smaller churches and probably on our own none of us can really afford to have a full-time pastor. It could be said proximity, because when it comes right down to it there is only 38.6 miles between the two furthest congregations, Lodi and Jackson.

But today and throughout this month, we're going to throw out the pragmatic thoughts and focus on the reality. It is God, the Holy One of Israel, the Lord of hosts, the One and only Holy God, who brings us together in unity and has been working over these last about 24 months to bring this about. Let's look at God, our Unifier, and let's really look at God.

Why do I say really look at God? Because of our Old Testament lesson this morning from Isaiah chapter 6 verses 1-4. The prophet Isaiah was given a vision of God and it carries with it a deep sense of awe. This is Isaiah and this vision was so awesome that Isaiah, the prophet to four different kings, the number one prophet, when it comes to messianic prophecies, the prophet who is given a vision of God; this Isaiah, when he sees God says, "Woe is me for I am lost. For I am a man of unclean lips and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips. For my eyes have seen The King, The LORD of hosts." And I emphasize that he says *the* King, and I emphasize that he says the LORD; which if you look in your Bible is all capital letters. It is the personal name of God. Yahweh. The Yahweh, I am. I am God of the hosts, the angelic host, that every host. And when we think about that, Isaiah's reaction, it leads us to biblical

reality, and I dare say biblical fact. It is impossible for a believer to be indifferent or apathetic when confronted by the holiness of God.

After all, I'd like you to consider what scripture tells us. If we go into the Old Testament, we see Leviticus 19:20; Leviticus 20 verse seven; Leviticus 20:26; Leviticus 21:8. And in the New Testament 1 Peter 1:16 and 1 Thessalonians 4:7 that a mandate is given to us, a command, that we are to be holy as God is holy. Wow! Therefore, our actual life, our practices, our actions in life, should flow out of this vision and God's holiness. So, we have a series, a four-week series on holiness. In particular, God's holiness. And today our focus is the importance that God puts on His holiness. We are going to start with Him, not us. And in the following three weeks we're going to see the impact of God's holiness on the believer's life. So, let's jump in! Let's take a look at the importance that God puts on His Holiness.

When we look at Isaiah 6, verses one to four, I think we have to first pause for a minute and put it into context. Context that maybe we can understand. I'm going to give you a day, a date, a time, a place. See if this day, this time or place brings back any memories for you. The day Friday, date November 26, 1963, the time 12:30 PM Central Standard Time, the place Daily Plaza, Dallas, Texas. Does this ring a bell for anybody? It does for me and please understand on that date in 1963 I was all of three years old. What happened? Our president John F. Kennedy was shot. Why do I bring that up? Well, because president, king, prime minister, monarch, whatever you want to say; anytime the leader of a country dies, it is a time of serious and very solemn trauma. So serious and traumatic that as a 3-year-old, I can remember JFK's funeral procession. I can remember the video of him being shot and in all honesty, I believe that is the earliest memory that I can actually give a time to. It was very traumatic.

Now why do I bring that up? Consider how Isaiah begins chapter 6. In the year that king Uzziah died. This is a serious and solemn traumatic year for Israel, for Judah. In the year that king Uzziah died, I saw... What makes it even more traumatic is that king Uzziah became king at the age of 16. He reigned for 50 years, and he was the last king that made some significant spiritual reforms in Israel and Judah. And

like so many other kings, in his last year of life, he lost his way. But imagine having a king, a president for 50 years, 49 of them pretty good and he dies. It was a serious a solemn traumatic year. That is the year in which Isaiah is given this vision. A vision of God in the temple or heaven. We don't know for certain, but most agree most biblical scholars agree that it was actually a vision of the heavenly throne room not the physical temple; that God literally pulled back the curtain of separation between earth and heaven so that Isaiah could see.

What did he see? He says, "I saw the LORD." Now, if you're looking at that in the Bible, you will see that L is capitalized, and then lower case "ord." Lord, that's the English way of saying this is Adonai, means Master. I saw the Master sitting upon His throne and His train, or His robe, and what flowed behind it, filled the entire temple. I was listening to a podcast by R.C. Sproul as he talked about this particular verse. He equated it to Queen Elizabeth when she was walking down the aisle for her wedding, if I remember correctly. It took six men behind her to carry the train of her robe. The longer the train, the more majestic. And the train of the Lord's robe fills the temple. It goes down the aisle, it comes back up, and it zig-zags back and forth. This is extreme majesty! And above Him fly the Seraphim with six wings. A pair of wings to cover their eyes, a pair of wings to cover their feet, a pair of wings with which to fly.

And I have to just go on a little tangent here. I'd like you to consider another aspect of the majesty and holiness of God. It is the economy of the Creator. Think about it. When God created the world; and yes, He created the world. This is not through evolution, it's not through God directed evolution, He spoke, it became! Notice the economy of creation. Birds have two wings, you need to fly. Do you need three? Do you need four? No, you just need two. God gives us two. He gives us two hands. One to hold, one to work. He gives us two eyes you need 2 for stereoscopic vision which gives you depth perception.

And to the Angel, the seraphim that is in the throne room, designed, created to glorify God, He gives three pairs of wings. Two wings, a pair to cover the eyes; why? Because that which is created cannot stand the vision or see God. Lest as we see in the Old Testament the created dies. That is how majestic and glorious the Creator, God is. That is why I

takes such a strong stand against evolution, and every thought because it diminishes that majesty and glory of God. And two wings, a pair of wings to cover his feet, why? Well think of Moses at the burning bush. Take off the sandals of your feet for you are standing on holy ground. Covering the feet; even our feet aren't worthy or the angel's feet, those that have not fallen into sin are not worthy to stand in the presence of God, on His holy ground. And two to fly and what do they do as they fly? They cry out, they sing: "Holy, holy, holy," they say it three times. Just like we sang, "holy, holy, holy, is the Lord, God almighty. But they say, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord, Yahweh, of hosts. Try to imagine that. We just sang it together, it was beautiful. Now think of that in heaven, the seraphim leading this song and all the Saints, and all the other angels, and the cherubim, all joining in and singing this.

And why the repetition of holy, holy, holy? As we saw in last week's sermon, this is a way of emphasizing something. Jesus said truly, truly, amen, amen. It is listen carefully, this is so. Yes, it is so. But in this case, three, the number of Trinity, puts a super high emphasis on holiness. And I want you to consider this, the only attribute of God that rises to this level of triple repetition is His Holiness; not His mercy, not His love, not His grace, not His power, not His omniscience, not His justice; His Holiness. And when the Angels sing holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts, the foundations of heaven shake. Even the non-living foundation of heaven has the sense to shake in the presence of a holy God. Wow! This takes us to our gospel this morning even the demons shake in the presence of the Holy God.

And now I'd like to transition it to right here, and right now. Is there any shaking in your boots? Because consider this, Jesus told us where two or three are gathered, there is He in the midst. He is here with us now. And as we celebrate communion today, His presence is here today. His physical presence is here with us today through the elements. And it's just not present in the elements, and yes that's a divine mystery. But again, it's God who does this and as I've said so many times with the congregation at Zion; it's how God works when He wants us to know He is there with us. He enters this world. He takes physical elements, and He shows us, "I'm here."

So they had the cloud in the wilderness, they had the pillar of fire, the burning Bush with Moses, the Ark of the Covenant; and we have the bread, we have the wine, an assurance that He is physically present with us and as we take communion, in us. So, whether we are in Lodi, or Jackson, or Valley Springs, or wherever we may be; we should be in awe right here, right now. Not only is God bringing us together in ministry, He, Himself is with us.

Today is a most holy day and my hope and my prayer is that He will be with us, and that this will be a most holy sermon series through June. I'll tag team to pastor Tim and that we have a most holy sermon series in July. Sorry to put pressure on you, Pastor Tim. And that we would have a very most holy unity among us because it is God who brings us together worshipping Him, working together for Him, and communing with Him today. May this indeed be a day of great awe for us and a day that we remember as a most holy day.

In Jesus Name, Amen.